

## Retention Guidelines for LEP Students

Grade level retention of students identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) is a delicate issue that must be taken seriously. Retention of LEP students may not be based solely upon a student's level of English language proficiency. Since academic success is dependent on English language proficiency, academic difficulties may not be justification for retaining an LEP student. While in Kentucky, keeping a student in a primary program for an additional year is not technically termed "retention," it is similar enough that such a decision could easily become a legal issue.

When teachers, administrators, and sometimes parents, are considering whether an LEP student should repeat the current grade level, the following questions should be considered. The NKCES EL Consultant is available to address these questions with the teachers, administrators, and possibly the parents, of the student in question.

- 1) What is the student's level of English language proficiency (ELP) as measured by his or her most recent ELP assessment?
- 2) Based on the student's level of ELP, what are the implications for his/her performance on grade level academic tasks?
- 3) For what length of time has the student been enrolled in an English speaking school?
- 4) How does the student's length of time in an English speaking school compare to the 5-7 year average students require to gain cognitive academic language proficiency?
- 5) Have limited formal schooling or irregular attendance been factors in this student's educational background?

- 6) Has the teacher consistently implemented the suggested classroom modifications and accommodations as outlined on the student's Program Services Plan (PSP)?
- 7) Has the student shown progress, to any degree, throughout the current school year?
- 8) Is the retention being considered due to factors unrelated to the student's level of ELP?

If, after examining these factors, the teachers, administrators, and parents all agree that retention is in the best interest of the student's short-term and long-term success, careful documentation is required. The documentation should explain the steps taken that led to this decision and should provide evidence that the retention was unrelated to the student's level of ELP. The documentation must be kept in the student's cumulative file and a copy of it should be forwarded to NKCES for inclusion in the student's EL file.